Academic Leader Program Evaluation:

Florence City Schools

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1. Introduction

**Evaluation Purpose**

* Florence City Schools academic leader program was designed to provide a voice for educators across the system; a leadership role that could make a difference. The purpose of my evaluation of the academic leader program is to discover if the program is doing what it was designed to do; is it accomplishing its purpose. This evaluation should show how effective the program is and if participants feel it is working as it was designed. Through this process the programs strengths and weaknesses should be highlighted and I should be able to give concrete evidence to support either the continuation or revamping of the program.
* The information from this evaluation will be used to inform school and community leaders and school leadership of the pros and cons of the academic leader program. The evaluation will provide information that can help to improve the program and it could validate the money spent on the program. The academic leaders program is funded through local funds. Through this evaluation it should become evident whether or not these funds are being spent appropriately or would be better spent elsewhere. Lastly, my evaluation should be useful in identifying professional development topics for future leaders.

**Stakeholders**

* The stakeholders identified for the purposes of developing this evaluation plan are Janet Womack, Superintendent and founder of the program, Anne Behel, director of the program and Susan Meyer, a current academic leader. These were the specific stakeholders who participated in interviews to lay the ground work for this evaluation plan.
* Each of these stakeholders participated in an interview which provided background and mission information for this program.
* The stakeholders will participate in the evaluation plan by providing data through interviews and survey responses. They will also be given an opportunity to review information collected and interpret this data to help provide a clear and concise evaluation of the findings

**Table 1. Stakeholder Assessment and Engagement Plan**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stakeholder Name** | **Interest or Perspective** | **Role in the Evaluation** | How and When to Engage |
| Janet Womack | Founder of the Program | Provide background information on the academic leader program | **\***initial contact via email to set up phone interview  \*interview should be conducted initially to provide a solid foundation for plan development |
| Anne Behel | Program Director | Provide information on the current progress of the program and the daily operation of the program | **\***email interview questions to get her perspective.  \*questions should be forwarded initially to provide solid foundation for plan development |
| Susan Meyer | Academic Leader System wide for Special Education | Provide information from an insider’s perspective. As an academic leader Susan provides an objective perspective to the evaluation process. | **\***email interview questions to get her perspective.  \* questions should be forwarded initially to provide solid foundation for plan development |
|  |  |  |  |

2. Description of What is Being Evaluated

**Need**

* Florence City Schools Academic Leader program has recently been revamped adding supplements and greater responsibilities. There is a need to evaluate the program to ensure it is functioning as intended.

**Context**

* The environment for this evaluation is a favorable one. The stakeholders and all parties involved have a vested interested in seeing the Academic Leader program functioning as it was intended. However, careful interpretation of the data will be crucial to insure no bias exist from participants with a vested interested in the success of the program.

**Target Population**

* The target population for this evaluation is all teachers, administrators and leadership in the Florence City School system, with emphasis on the teachers and academic leaders that are the main participants and beneficiaries of the program.

**Stage of Development**

* This is the second year Florence City Schools Academic leader program has been functioning with a specified purpose and mission.
* The program is in the implementation stage.

**Resources/Inputs**

* Resources to support the evaluation of the Academic Leader program include: personnel- teachers, academic leaders, administration and program leadership; technology-email, online surveys; and professional leave time; funds for substitutes.

**Activities**

* Specific activities planned to achieve outcomes include but are not limited to: interviews with stakeholders; surveys of participants, which include teachers and academic leaders separately; group interviews of both teachers and academic leaders; and conversations with administrators about the program.

**Outputs**

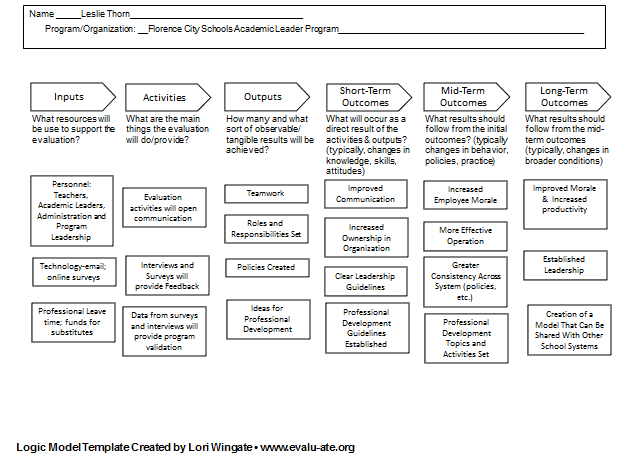
* As a result of the activities planned, a wide range of data will be available for evaluation which includes but is not limited to: survey results from both academic leaders and the teachers they serve, interview data from stakeholders, interview data from teachers and their academic leaders and insights from the administrative staff who work with all parities involved.**Outcomes**
* Intended outcomes:

Short term- improved communication; increased ownership in organization; clear leadership guidelines; professional development guidelines established

Mid-term- increased employee morale; more effective operation; greater consistency across system (policies, etc.); professional development topics and activities

* Long-term outcomes: improved morale & increased productivity; established leadership; creation of a model that can be shared with other school systems
* Occurs between activities and ultimate outcomes: improved communication; increased ownership in organization; clear leadership guidelines; professional development guidelines established; increased employee morale; more effective operation; greater consistency across system (policies, etc.); professional development topics and activities

**Logic Model Template**

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3. Evaluation Design

**Evaluation Questions**

* This evaluation program seeks to answer several specific questions in regards to the Academic Leader program: 1) is this program doing what it was designed to do-is it accomplishing its purpose. 2) How effective is the program and do the participants feel it is working as it was designed. 3) What are the programs strengths and weaknesses?

**Stakeholder Needs**

* The evaluation findings will be used by Florence City Schools' leadership team.
* The leadership team needs to learn if the Academic Leader program is an asset to the school system; if it is helping teachers do their job more effectively
* The findings will be used to make needed adjustments to the program such as changing of any expectations from academic leaders, adjustments to supplements and/or change to how academic leaders are selected.
* The intended users of this evaluation program will view data from surveys and interviews and credible information.

**Evaluation Design**

* For my evaluation of the Academic Leader program of Florence City Schools, objectives-oriented approach would be the best fit for my evaluation plan. The purpose of the Academic Leader program is specific and my evaluation will focus on the extent to which the objectives of this program are being met and how well they are being achieved. Provu’s Discrepancy Evaluation Model works to distinguish if there is a discrepancy between the objectives set for the program and the actual performance of the program to determine if change is needed to the program. I feel this approach would be helpful in determining if the Academic Leader program of Florence City Schools is affective as is.
* I selected this design because I can adapt my evaluation plan to encompass the characteristics of participant evaluation by focusing my evaluation on the participants in the program-the academic leaders. The participants are the key to this program. The objectives of the program focus on giving the participants and their coworkers more input in the planning and performing of duties. My survey will focus on the participants of the program and strive to gain an understanding of how these participants help the programs objectives be met.

4. Data Collection

**Data Collection Methods**

* New data will be used to answer the evaluation questions.
* Stakeholder interviews, teacher and academic leader surveys and group interviews will be used to acquire and collect data.
* All data collected will be used.
* Surveys and interview questions will be composed by the evaluator and data collection instruments will be used via the internet.
* The quality and utility of existing data will be determined by the methods of collection. Standard procedures of confidentiality and anonymity will insure quality and utility of data.
* The source of data will be program stakeholders, teachers, current academic leaders and school administration.
* Data collected will be kept protected under lock and key.

**Data Collection Method – Evaluation Question Link**

**Table 2: Evaluation Questions and Associated Data Collection Methods**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Question** | **Data Collection Method** | **Source of Data** |
| 1. Is this program doing what it was designed to do-is it accomplishing its purpose. | Survey via internet | Survey Results |
| Group interviews | Notes from group interviews |
| 2. What are the programs strengths and weaknesses? | Survey via the internet | Survey Results |
| Group interviews | Notes from group interviews |
|  |  |

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

**Indicators and Standards**

* The level of the performance of the academic leader program can be measured by the perceptions of those who are affected by the program each and every day. Interview questions designed to address the specific evaluation questions can help the evaluator to determine if the program is functioning as it was designed and also help to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of the program.
* Success of the academic leader program will be determined by the percentage of teachers and academic leaders who agree that the program is in fact meeting the pre-set goals. Eighty percent agreement will be needed to indicate success of the program sticking to its mission. For question two addressing strengths and weaknesses, any information gained is both useful and helpful making any information a success.

**Table 3. Indicators and Success**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Question** | **Criteria or Indicator** | **Standards**  **(What Constitutes “Success”?)** |
| 1. Is this program doing what it was designed to do-is it accomplishing its purpose. | *\*survey indicators* | *80% agreement* |
| *\*Group interview consensus of success* | *80% agreement* |
| 2. What are the programs strengths and weaknesses? | *\*Any strengths identified* | *\*any information gained indicates success* |
| *\*Any weaknesses identified* | *\*any information gained indicates success* |
|  |  |

**Analysis**

* Simple percentages will be used to analyze the data collected via the surveys. Descriptive statistics will be a viable option for the group interview data. Overall a content analysis can be used to look at the qualitative and quantitative data and draw conclusions that will inform the evaluator on the effectiveness of the program and its strengths and weaknesses.

**Interpretation**

* The stakeholders I identified for my initial interviews will be the best prospects for helpful interpretation of the data. Each of these individuals can bring a differing perspective of the data. The evaluator can also be a reliable contributor for drawing, interpreting and justifying the conclusions based on the fact she will be using participatory evaluation based on the fact she is an academic leader herself.
* The stakeholders will be involved from the beginning to the end of the evaluation process. The initial interview is the start. Throughout the process they will be involved in survey completion and group interview participation. The concluding involvement in the interpretation of the data is the next logical progression of involvement for these individuals.

6. Communication and Reporting

**Use**

* Promotion of the evaluation process via the superintendent’s use of the Yap App-used to disseminate information in a creative way-will be used. Administration will promote evaluation use via email and faculty meetings. Evaluator will use various platforms to explain the benefits of use such as more input, increased involvement and increased overall productivity.
* Evaluation findings will be used to solidify a mission statement for the Academic leader program and to establish an academic leader model that can be promoted to other schools systems as an effective way to improve teacher productivity.
* All current academic leaders would be responsible for implementing evaluation recommendations.

**Communication**

* The status of the evaluation will be communicated to Dr. Womack our Superintendent not only because she is the founder of the program, but because she has the highest level of interest in the success or failure of the program. The status would also be communicated to Anne Behel the program director. Her position as director makes the information from the evaluation crucial to her managing of the program. For each of these individuals, interim reports as well as the final evaluation report would be given.
* Information regarding the ongoing and final results of the evaluation would be given to stakeholders in several ways. Frequent email communication will keep stakeholders up to speed on how the evaluation is progressing. Quarterly meetings will be conducted for those who wish to be informed of the progress. The final results will be disseminated via a written report as well as a formal presentation to all stakeholders.
* These methods of communication the evaluation information to stakeholders would be appropriate based on the stakeholders involved in this evaluation process. The teachers and academic leaders involved in this evaluation are accustomed to information being given in these modes and will be more involved if familiar methods are used.

7. Evaluation management

**Evaluation Team**

**Table 4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Team Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Individual** | **Title or Role** | **Responsibilities** |
| Leslie Thorn | Academic Leader-System-wide Physical Education | \*Identification of Evaluation questions  \*Identification of stakeholders  \*Identification of group interview participants  \*Collaborator on compilation of all data |
| Susan Meyer | Academic Leader-System-wide Special Education | \*Developer of Group interview guide  \*Conductor of group interview  \*Collector and interpreter of group interview data  \*Collaborator on compilation of all data |
| Mindy Hutton | Media Specialist Forest Hills School | \*Development of on-line survey  \*Collection of survey data  \*Evaluation of survey data and creator of presentation revealing the survey results  \*Collaborator on compilation of all data |

**Data Collection Management**

* Data collected will include stakeholder interview answers, survey answers and group interview answers
* For successful collection of data:

-Email stakeholders to set up interviews either via phone or internet-beginning of evaluation process

-Compile survey and disseminate via the internet-second phase of evaluation (once interviews of stakeholders are completed).

-Compile interview group’s questionnaire, select group for interview and conduct group interviews (this should be done as soon as 80% of surveys have been completed).

* Persons responsible for evaluation activities:

-Leslie-email and interview stakeholders; compile a list of group interview participants

-Mindy-compile both surveys and disseminate to all academic leaders and teachers respectively

-Susan-compile both interview questionnaires and conduct group interviews

**Table 5. Data Collection Plan**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Questions** | **Data Collection Method** | **Activities Needed** | **Person(s) Responsible** | **Due Date** |
| 1. Is this program doing what it was designed to do-is it accomplishing its purpose. | Survey | Disseminate survey | Mindy | Oct. |
| Compile result | Mindy | Feb |
| Group Interview | Select group | Leslie | Oct |
| Conduct interview | Susan | Jan |
|  |  | Compile data from interviews | Susan | Feb |
| 2. What are the programs strengths and weaknesses? | Stakeholder interviews | Contact stakeholders | Leslie | Sept |
| Conduct interviews | Leslie | Oct |
| Compile results | Leslie | Dec |
| Survey  Group Interview | Disseminate survey | Mindy | Oct |
| Compile Results | Mindy | Feb |
| Conduct interview | Susan | Jan |
| Compile results | Susan | Feb |

**Data Analysis Management**

* All data collected from the stakeholder interviews, surveys and group interviews will be analyzed separately by the dates indicated above in the chart. All data will be compiled together analyzed by Leslie, Susan and Mindy by March and results presented in May.
* Leslie is responsible for conducting the analysis. She will be assisted by Susan and Mindy and by Dr. Green from the University of North Alabama who has collaborated with Leslie on other research projects. His knowledge in the area of statistics will be helpful in analyzing the quantitative data from the survey.

**Table 6. Data Analysis Plan**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Analysis to Be Performed** | **Data to Be Analyzed** | **Person(s) Responsible** | **Due Date** |
| Measures of Central tendency | Survey Results | Dr. Green | March |
| Qualitative methods coding | Group interview results | Leslie | March |

**Communicating and Reporting Management**

* The target audiences for reporting the progress of the evaluation and the findings would be the stakeholders (Womack, Behel) along with all current academic leaders, teachers and board members.
* The purpose of communicating the results to this audience is to provide updates of the progress of the evaluation and the results of the evaluation.
* For updating this audience on the progress of the evaluation, email is the most effective communication. It is the quickest and most prolific way to get this information out to everyone. For providing the results of the evaluation, a meeting with a formal presentation of the findings would be the most appropriate communication method based on the fact that all teachers and academic leaders have a vested interest in the outcome of the evaluation and need an effective way to not only view the results, but an environment that invites question and answer sessions so there is no confusion.
* Communication will take place throughout the process via email. The final presentation of the evaluation results will take place at the final Institute meeting of the entire school system in May.

**Table 7. Communication and Reporting Plan**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Audience 1: *Florence City Schools Teachers*** | | | | |
| **Applicable? Yes/No** | **Purpose of Communication** | **Possible Formats** | **Timing/Dates** | **Notes** |
| Yes | Include in decision making about evaluation design/activities | Faculty meetings | Oct.  Jan  April | \*dates subject to change if issues arise |
| Yes | Inform about specific upcoming evaluation activities | email | Each month | \*Pre-set dates consistent each month |
| No | Keep informed about progress of the evaluation |  |  | \*most teachers will only want to know when things are finished-information overload may result if too much info is given. |
| Yes | Present initial/interim findings | Faculty Meeting | April | \*short and sweet |
| Yes | Present complete/final findings | Institute | May | \*Include graphs and visuals to increase interest |
| Yes | Document the evaluation and its findings | Research Report | June | \*possible publication |

Adapted from Russ-Eft and Preskill, 2001, pp. 354–357.

**Timeline**

* Planning will take place in the summer before school starts. Stakeholder interviews will take place before Oct; survey will be conducted by Nov; Group interviews completed by Jan; initial results ready by April with final draft ready in May.
* Pilot testing will occur in August and October.
* Data collection will take place in August,
* Information will be disseminated each month until final evaluation findings are presented in May.
* Careful attention will need to be taken to ensure that the conducting of the group interviews does not interfere with the completion of the survey task.

**Evaluation Budget**

* The cost of this evaluation is minimal. The only foreseeable cost would be to pay for substitutes for interviewees and interviewers.
* There is a possibility that grant money may be available to pay for the substitutes needed. The partnership that Florence City Schools has with the Anderson Foundation also provides another possible avenue for funds that can be explored.

**REFERENCES**

**Logic Model Template Created by Lori Wingate •** [**www.evalu-ate.org**](http://www.evalu-ate.org)

**Appendices**

**Florence City School's Academic Leader Program**

***Interview Questions:***

1.  How would you describe the Academic Leader Program-What is the purpose?

2.  How was the program started (whose idea) and why?

3.  What are the requirements to apply for an Academic Leader position?

4.  Who decides who will fill the positions?

5.  Who decides what responsibilities the Academic Leaders or how are duties or "jobs" decided on throughout the year?

6.  Where does funding come from for the Academic Leader program?

7.  What do you think are the greatest benefits and/or drawbacks of the Academic Leader program?

8.  What, if any, future changes do you foresee for the Academic Leader Program?

**Teacher Survey on Academic Leader Program**

Directions: Choose the best response to each question. Please choose only one answer. Click the button beside your answer choice.

1. Do you feel your Academic Leader represents your interest?
2. All the time
3. Some of the time
4. I have no feeling either way
5. Hardly ever
6. My Academic Leader does not represent my interest
7. Do you respect your Academic Leader?
8. Yes, all time
9. Sometimes
10. No, I do not
11. Do you feel your Academic Leader does a good job of speaking on your behalf?
12. Yes, all the time
13. Yes, some of the time
14. I have no feeling either way
15. No, hardly ever
16. My Academic Leader does not speak on my behalf
17. How often does your academic Leader communicate with you?
18. Three or more times a week
19. Once a week
20. Once every two weeks
21. Once a month
22. Once a nine weeks or less
23. How much do you feel the Academic Leader program has improved communication between leadership and teachers in the classroom?
24. Greatly improved
25. Improved
26. Neither improved nor hindered
27. Did not improve
28. Hindered
29. How much of your workload has your Academic Leader taken off of your plate?
30. A large amount of work has been taken off my plate
31. I cannot tell a difference in my workload
32. My workload has increased since Academic Leaders were instated.
33. Do you feel the Academic Leader program needs some changes?
34. Yes, I feel several changes need to be made
35. I have no feeling either way
36. No, I feel the program is fine the way it is
37. How helpful do you feel your Academic Leader has been?
38. Very helpful
39. Helpful
40. Somewhat helpful
41. Not very helpful at all
42. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Academic Leader program?
43. Very satisfied
44. Satisfied
45. Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
46. Somewhat satisfied
47. Not satisfied at all
48. How likely are you to recommend the Academic Leader program to another school system?
49. Very likely
50. Likely
51. Somewhat likely
52. Not very likely

**Academic Leader Survey**

Directions: Choose the best response to each question. Please choose only one answer. Click the button beside your answer choice.

1. For the following statement, please choose the statement that is most true:
2. My Academic Leader role was not at all what I expected
3. My Academic Leader role was somewhat what I expected
4. My Academic Leader role was all I expected it to be
5. For the following statement, please choose the statement that is most true:
6. I knew what my responsibilities were
7. I was unsure what my responsibilities were
8. For the following statement, please choose the statement that is most true:
9. My Academic Leader position was too much responsibility and extra work
10. The work load and time spend as Academic Leader was reasonable
11. Do you feel your role as Academic Leader is important?
12. Always
13. Often
14. Some of the time
15. Not very often
16. Never
17. Do you feel your position as Academic Leader is valued by school leadership?
18. Always
19. Often
20. Some of the time
21. Not very often
22. Never
23. How much of an impact do you feel the Academic Leader program has had on teacher effectiveness?
24. A major effect
25. Some effect in some areas
26. No effect whatsoever
27. What effect did the stipend have on your decision to apply for Academic Leader?
28. It was the deciding factor
29. It played a major role
30. It played a small part
31. It didn’t matter either way I would have with no stipend
32. After serving as Academic Leader would you apply again if given the opportunity
33. Yes without hesitation
34. Yes but only if no one else wanted it
35. I have no feelings either way
36. No, I would not apply again
37. If your time as Academic Leader were over today, which statement best describes your feelings:
38. Relieved! Glad is over; good riddance!
39. Mixed feelings-would miss some aspects but not others
40. Sad it is over-wish it would continue
41. I would not care one way or the other

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Academic Leader program?
2. Very Satisfied
3. Satisfied
4. Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
5. Dissatisfied
6. Very dissatisfied

**Teacher Focus Group Interview Questions**

1. What responsibilities do you feel your Academic Leader has?

Follow up: Is your Academic Leader fulfilling these responsibilities?

1. What is lacking in your relationship with your Academic Leader?
2. What do you feel are the most positive aspects of the Academic Leader Program?
3. What changes in the Academic Leader program do you feel need to take place?
4. If your identity was concealed what would you say to your Academic Leader?

**Academic Leader Focus Group Interview Questions**

1. What responsibilities do you feel you have as an Academic Leader?

Follow up: Do you feel you are fulfilling these responsibilities?

1. As an Academic Leader what actions by school leadership make you feel appreciated or unappreciated?
2. What actions by your teachers would enable you to be a better Academic Leader or hinder you from being an effective Academic Leader?
3. What changes, if any, would help you be a better Academic Leader?
4. If you could voice your concerns anonymously, what would you say to school leadership and/or teachers you represent regarding your duties as Academic Leader?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Data Source** | **Data Use** |
| Stakeholder Interview: Dr. Womack  (Program Founder) | \*Intended purpose of Academic Leader program  \*Founders perspective |
| Stakeholder Interview: Anne Behel  (Program Director) | \*Pre-set parameters of the Academic Leader program  \*Responsibilities of Academic Leader program from the directors perspective |
| Stakeholder Interview: Susan Meyer  (Special Education Academic Leader) | \*Program from Academic Leader’s perspective  \*Identify program deficiencies |
| Academic Leader Survey | \*Establish if Academic Leader program is functioning as intended  \*If program is effective and valued |
| Teacher Survey | \*Establish if program is benefiting teachers  \*Establish effectiveness of the program |
| Academic Leader Focus Group | \*Pinpoint strengths and weakness from the Academic Leaders perspective |
| Teacher Focus Group | \*Pinpoint strengths and weaknesses from the teachers perspective |

**Data Sources Summary-Academic Leader Program**